



# Wyoming Landscape Conservation Initiative

*"Conserving world-class wildlife resources. Facilitating responsible development."*



## What is the WLCI?

The WLCI combines the resources of multiple groups across southwest Wyoming to build a common vision for this large area, or landscape. The WLCI vision is for an area that balances open spaces, abundant wildlife, traditional agriculture and production of energy and other resources. Supporting this vision is use of science-based information and local expertise, development of partnerships, and exchange of information.

Wyoming encompasses some of the highest quality wildlife habitats in the Intermountain West. Sagebrush, mountain shrub, aspen, riparian and aquatic focus communities provide crucial habitat for deer, elk, pronghorn antelope, greater sage-grouse, a variety of fish and non-game species. This region's vast open spaces support an important livestock industry and provide essential corridors for migratory wildlife. Lands and water in southwest Wyoming also offer some of the country's most sought-after recreational opportunities.

Southwest Wyoming has an abundance of renewable and non-renewable energy resources. The combination of energy development and industrial and residential expansion with associated roads, drilling, pipelines, transmission lines, and other human-generated activities is occurring in wildlife habitat areas.



WLCI Landscape

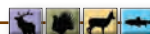


Executive Committee tours aspen treatments

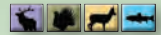
The greatest value of wildlife conservation is achieved when wildlife enhancement is conducted at a landscape scale. A landscape is a land area composed of a diversity of habitat types which encompass year-round fish and wildlife needs such as winter range or migration corridors. Access to a variety of habitat types and seasonal ranges within a landscape is essential for wildlife to find food, shelter, and raise their young. To be successful, landscape scale conservation needs to involve collaboration with all state, federal, and private landowners.

The WLCI works to ensure the wildlife and habitat remain viable across the landscape, even with significant development pressure. The priority objectives addressed within the focus communities are: fragmented habitats, invasive species, and water quality and quantity. The WLCI works to maintain, improve or restore the ecological function and health within these habitats.

*The WLCI is a long-term, science-based program to assess and enhance aquatic and terrestrial habitats at the landscape scale in southern Wyoming, while facilitating responsible development through local collaboration and partnerships.*



## Fast Facts



- The WLCI area encompasses 19 million acres—roughly the size of South Carolina.
- 1,700 family farms and ranches support 225,000 cattle and 120,000 sheep.
- An estimated 100,000 deer; 100,000 antelope; 40,000 elk; 8,000 moose; 1,400 bighorn sheep; and 151 non-game species of greatest conservation need make their home here.
- Five national forests, a national recreation area, and a national monument are included in the WLCI area.
- Numerous historic sites include the Oregon, California, Mormon Trails and the Pony Express Route.
- Enough natural gas is produced to heat 15 million homes per year.
- Approximately 14 million tons of coal are mined.
- The area has premium wind sites that could produce billions of kilowatt hours of electricity.
- The area has the world's largest deposit of trona, supplying 90% of the nation's soda ash.

## Get Involved!



The partnerships represented by the WLCI are most effective if they include the individuals and groups who live and work in southwest Wyoming. Three great ways to get involved are project development, information sharing, and making a contribution.

## Science Based

One of the key successes of the WLCI is incorporation of science findings into a landscape-scale conservation planning process, leading to measurable improvements in ecosystem functions.

A USGS team of hydrologists, geologists, biologists, geographers, social scientists, and information-management specialists developed a science approach that addresses resource management needs identified by WLCI partners. Major strategies include assessing what is already known about southwest Wyoming's ecosystems and the people who use the land, conducting monitoring and research to detect changes and improve our knowledge, and developing ways to use knowledge and share it with everyone.

Activities include development of methods to use spatial images to assess changes over time and to map key areas of habitat, development, and conservation work. In addition, data are acquired and standardized to help guide ongoing and future monitoring and research. Compiled data are used in some evaluations of habitat-improvement projects. In this way, science becomes an important tool for determining the future of the landscape.



Greater sage-grouse, a key species of the sage-brush focus community

## Donate!



The WLCI has an agreement with the Wildlife Heritage Foundation of Wyoming to manage contributions for WLCI work. Donations can be made through [www.wlci.gov](http://www.wlci.gov) or send a tax-free contribution to:

**Wildlife Heritage Foundation/WLCI**  
P.O. Box 20088  
Cheyenne, WY 82003

## Projects

Information gathered through scientific inventory and assessment of species and habitat is combined with local input and knowledge to develop and implement conservation projects. This information is put together in a Conservation Action Plan that creates a common strategy for the landscape. The WLCI holds regular Local Project Development Team meetings, where public participation is needed and expected. The collaborative WLCI effort considers all activities on the landscape, incorporates multiple needs and concerns in project implementation and leverages resources to accomplish more. WLCI science and conservation targets sagebrush, mountain shrub, aspen, riparian zones, and aquatic systems.

### Project Facts



- 54 projects were funded from 2007–2011
- 28 projects are multi-year or multi-phased
- 27 projects are proposed for 2012
- Projects are conducted on public and private lands
- Each WLCI project dollar leverages \$7 or more in partner contributions and in-kind services



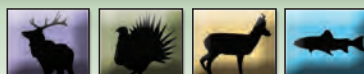
Volunteers planting native trees



Planning at a local project meeting

## Partnerships

The WLCI partnership formally includes the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), U.S. Geological Service (USGS), U.S. Forest Service, Wyoming Department of Agriculture, Wyoming Game and Fish Department (WGFD), local conservation districts, and local county commissions. Additional groups and individuals participate as well.



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